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**Boulevard Planning Group**  
Minutes/Summary  
for meeting held December 4, 2008

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
AND LAND USE**

The meeting was called to order at 7 PM. Members present: Marilyn Polen, Pat Stuart, Jeffrey McKernan, Donna Tisdale, Bill Parsons, Darlene Koczka, Chris Noland.

The Chair thanked Marilyn Poland for her many years of service to the community as a member of this planning group. Polen had elected not to run in the recent election, but planned to stay involved.

The minutes for the November 6 meeting were approved: M/S Poland/Parsons: 6-0-1 (Pat Stuart abstained due to absence at last meeting).

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**5A. Iberdrola Renewables (PPM Energy) presented their plan of development for their 200 MW Tule Wind Energy Project in McCain Valley.** Representatives from Iberdrola gave a PowerPoint presentation and discussed their proposed industrial wind energy Project slated for approximately 20,000 acres of BLM land located in McCain Valley. The project area includes Lark Canyon OHV Park and Campground and the Cottonwood Campground. Iberdrola's Permitting and Environmental Director, Andy Linehan, introduced the others on his team: Ed Clark, Director of Development for the Western US, including this project, Wayne Mays, Director of Engineering, and Michelle Sinning and Chelsey Dickerson from Consensus Planning Group, who set up this meeting. Linehan stated that Iberdrola (formerly known as PPM Energy) is based in Portland, Oregon. They were part of Scottish Power before they were acquired by the Spanish company Iberdrola. Iberdrola is the largest owner of renewable energy around the world. Their newest project is the 40 MW Dillion project in Palm Springs area. Linehan said he is involved with all of the environmental aspects of the projects. He works with the permit process and various studies to make sure they are minimizing the impacts on wildlife and the environment. They are involved in supporting research on potential impacts on bats. He has also been involved with guidelines for siting of projects in California. There is a 2-year process for the California Energy Commission and the Department of Fish and Game. He also is involved with the Federal Advisory Committee for wind power and Wildlife in Washington DC.

Wayne Mays described how wind turbines work, the size of some of the major turbine components and the transmission lines that would connect this project to the utility (SDG&E). The blades turn a gear box that drives the generator in the nacelle. The nacelles are the enclosed boxes at the top of the tower. Power is transmitted down the tower at low voltage, in the inside of the tower, through cables, down to the ground to the transformer and transformed to 34.5 kV. It then is collected by a series of distribution lines to a collector substation. At that substation, usually located in the middle of the project, there is a transformer that will convert that to a transmission voltage. 69,000 volts will be put onto a new 3-phase 69 kV transmission line, with self-supporting steele poles, that connects to the Boulevard Substation, and then to the SDG&E 500kV line.

They stated they keep competition with turbine companies going and don't yet know if they will go with 1.5 MW turbines or 3 MW each. The total project size is 200 MW with between 67 turbines and 133

turbines, depending on turbine size. Spacing between units is determined by how many turbines there are in a project. Larger turbines are 492 feet in height, the smaller turbines are 389 feet tall. Blade diameter is 253 to 328 feet. Each blades is 120 to 130 feet long. The blades are typically 130-140 feet above the ground at their lowest point.

Ed Clark said construction will take 8-10 months (late 2010-2011), with a peak construction force of about 150 people. Iberdrola provides the project management and the key people to erect these towers. They will hire specialized contractors. He claimed that a good chunk of the road work, accommodations, the concrete, laying the cable in, and the electric work, will come through the local contractors out of the San Diego area. Once the project is built, there would be about 10 jobs in the operations and maintenance crew. There was laughter when Clark stated there will be some indirect economic benefits through our local businesses, hotels, cafes, and local sub-contractors, and comments made about our lack of local businesses.

Clark stated the Tule Wind project is located primarily on land in McCain Valley that the BLM designated as potentially suitable for wind in its Record of Decision(ROD). He also claimed that the actual footprint of a wind farm is about 1 acre per turbine – 2% of that total project area is actually utilized permanently. This limited impact statement was also challenged by group members and the public.

Clark stated they had just learned that Tule Wind is considered a connected action to Sunrise Powerlink. SDG&E said they are required, under FERC, to try to move ne energy by upgrading the existing 69kV line. With the increased BLM acreage allowed under the new Record of Decision, Iberdrola will fine a new Plan of Development and initiate the joint NEPA/CEQA review process with BLM and the CPUC. Mays said the longest “turbine string” would be 3 miles long.

The Chair asked if copies of this presentation would be given to the Planning Group. Iberdrola responded that they will at some point, but not presently. This denial was challenged as a violation of the Brown Act as the information was now considered public and, at a minimum, should have been made available to the Chair and group members prior to the meeting.

#### Questions / responses :

- Access and Easements – do you have them all in order? Response: Close. They plan to use Ribbonwood Road and use the Rough Acres ranch property to get across to McCain Valley project site.
- Damage to road beds and property, widening roads. Will these roads have to be widened? Response: Ribbonwood doesn't need to be modified.(this statement was also challenged and laughed at)
- Total cost of the project is 400 million? Response: Yes
- When trucks go down the roads and start tearing up the roads, what will be done? Response: We will work with the County to repair them. We usually do a video survey of the public roads that we will be using. If the roads are broken up, then we make our contractors fix them.
- Have you signed a contract with SDG&E yet? Response: We have not.
- What Tribal lands are you going to be on? Response: They are working with the Ewiiapaayp
- What State lands? Response: A State Lands section near the Ewiiapaayp at the top of the map.

- Do you have your financing in order? Response: We will see a slow down in this economic crisis in the wind business. This project probable won't be built until late 2010 or 2011.
- Are any Federal Funds paid directly to Iberdrola for the construction of this project? Response: No
- Is there a tax credit? Response: Right now there is a production tax credit of 2cents per Kilowatt hour that has been extended through 2009. Isn't wind the most expensive renewable? Response: Wind sells for about \$100.
- What does "Warehouse Wind" mean, as noted in Iberdrola documents? Response: Not sure
- Plan of Development will be filed around the beginning of 2009. What if the ROD is challenged. What do you plan on doing then? Response: We assume we will be filing in the beginning of the year – we haven't thought about a challenge.
- SDG&E estimates that it will over \$300 million dollars to move your energy another way if Sunrise Powerlink isn't built.
- Back up Gas Fired Generation – Pat Stuart stated she has read that they have to remain in an idling position so that when they are needed, they can come right on line. That seems to imply that a lot of gas will be used for this. Response: Gas Fired generation is excellent for low-volume. Such as when everyone gets up in the morning and turns on their coffee pots and bump their heating a little bit, then all of a sudden the load requirement goes up. So there a number of ways utilities can deal with that. One of them is that part of their gas fired generation is at part load. It depends on the amount of generation that has to be picked up. There is a cost to the wind because it is a non-firm.
- How long are these viable, is there a contract that goes with this? Response: We go on 30 years.
- Isn't this somewhat out-dated at this point? Shouldn't we be looking at other things than so much wind turbines? Response: Wind is the only renewable right now.
- You mentioned solar. Response: Solar in certain applications could be more cost effective.
- What about in-basin. Response: California is going to have to do all of the above. Regarding the impact of wind displacing fuels and producing air emissions, He referred the Planning Group to the California Energy Commissions website.
- Iberdrola is a Spanish owned company. Don't we have American owned companies that this would all be kept within our own country? Production tax credits are going out of our country.
- Where are these turbines being manufactured? Response: unknown at this time.
- This isn't something that isn't going to bring to us a benefit, locally. What will happen is that we will pay more tax money to make this happen. We will pay higher electricity rates after this happens. We will have hazardous machinery in our living environment. We will have a noise annoyance, and we will have our view destroyed. All of those things will add up to a profit for Iberdrola and a loss for us.
- What standard of noise are you going to use with these turbines? What decibel of noise is allowable. Response: The California noise guidelines will be complied with.
- Have you had experience with low-frequency humming and vibration at a distance from any of your projects? Response: I don't believe we have.
- There have been several reported accidents, injuries and explosions regarding turbines and that the companies have their own rescue squads that are called out when this happens prior to Cal Fire. Is that what is planned for this project? Response: We like to work with the local fire chief. Our crews are trained.
- A CDF firefighter noted that fire crews rotate through various areas – there are no permanent assignments. Iberdrola will need to train County Fire CSA 135 & Reservation Fire departments to

deal with these industrial turbines. Will you be training the entire personnel? Response: We need to talk to the proper people to do this in advance.

- What other projects do you have on BLM land that have recreational facilities nearby or right in the vicinity, and what kind of restrictions are there on those recreational lands. Response: We have another project on BLM land in Arizona. That one does not have a lot of recreation on it, but it is open to the public. We have a project in New York that is very popular for snowmobiling. The Chair noted that the New York property appears to be on private land which makes a big difference.
- Who is responsible for accidents caused by windmills? Response: It would be our responsibility. It would not be the private land owner.
- If a blade sheds in the recreational area out here on our BLM land and hits a recreational vehicle/person, who's responsibility would that be. Response: It would be our responsibility.
- What kind of access is going to be allowed in McCain Valley? Response: That's going to be up to BLM.
- What kind of setbacks are you going to require around each of the towers in the recreational areas? Response: We are not going to require a setback. The towers are enclosed. The main thing that we worry about is kids trying to climb up them. So the ladders are in the inside and there is a heavy steel door that is locked.
- Do not use the Kumeyaay wind farm as an excuse that this community already has a wind farm and there will be no problems. There are already problems with noise and blade shedding.
- What is the maximum height of the turbines? Response: 430 ft. at the tip of the blade.
- Will you shut them down in high winds?
- You mention that you are limited by the 200 megawatt inter-tie. But you also mentioned before that you had a 300 megawatt place in line. What is the potential for expansion here? Response: Not much. At this time we don't have anything going with any of the Tribes (except Ewiiapaay).
- You are putting up these turbines, which pose a fire threat, in an area that hasn't burned in 50-90 years. That liability alone is something you need to take into account.
- SDG&E is talking about shutting our power off when certain severe weather conditions are met. There is no way we will want to see turbines spinning and giant power lines moving energy to everybody else while we are sitting here in the dark.
- The ridges will be destroyed when you place these turbines on BLM land. Will they be on the higher ridges? Response: Prefer higher areas. We will have to level out a big enough spot for the foundation. An octagon about 50 feet in diameter with roads from turbine to turbine. A permanent road that is about 16 feet.
- Is there any blasting involved. Response: Yes if there is solid rock.
- Is your company going to be responsible for restoring McCain Valley at the end of this project? Response: We are responsible for taking down our equipment.
- How do you account for the disturbance to the wildlife for a year of blasting and cranes and heavy equipment moving in there?
- What happens to our water table if there is blasting?

A resident in the audience said he is about 5 miles (much closer as the crow flies) from the current turbines and there is a vibration, a groaning, you can hear the blades, and it sounds like a truck or a train off in the distance. It is a constant hum. Now this project is on the other side of me. I'm going to hear it from both sides – what are you going to do for my health? Denmark is refusing to build any more wind turbines because of health hazards. Have you done health studies for health hazards on humans? Wind Turbine

Syndrome was brought up. Another resident, neighbor to the previous speaker, stated that she has experienced ringing in her ears and an unexplained pressure in her head since the Kumeyaay turbines went into operation in 2005.

Another resident said she lives several miles from the current turbines and she has ear/hearing problems also. Doctors say everything fine, and can't determine the cause of the problems. Her million dollar view has been destroyed by turbines and blinking lights.

There were concerns raised with blade shedding like at the Kumeyaay turbines in the past year, tower collapse, shadow flicker and fires. The Chair reported recent articles of turbine fires and blade failures. Group member Parsons, said he hears the turbines from his home which south of Old 80. Group member Koczka stated that family members in CDF report frequent responses to turbine fires and problems in the Palm Springs area.

A formal request was made to Iberdrola to provide a DVD, or hard copies of the power point presentation to the Planning Group by the following week. When Iberdrola said that might be a problem, another audience member said that it would be a Brown Act Violation the material was not supplied.

#### **More questions:**

- What is the impact on property value when wind farms are built? Response: there is no impact. This was challenged.
- How will you get these large pieces of equipment off the freeway and onto Ribbonwood. Response: Have to go East until they are able to turn around.
- What surface do you plan on the connection roads from turbine to turbine. Just surface soil. No slag will be used.
- What job classifications would you have for locals, and what specialized training would they need to have. What about ongoing maintenance? Response: We can provide some information on that. Need training in electronics and electrical. Work with local community colleges to set up courses to help with training. What number of positions are available? 18 or so.
- Given the amount of money that you expect to put into this project, is anyone else going to purchase the power other than SDG&E? Response: Actually it goes into the Grid. We are going to have to sell the electrons, or the energy and will need a contract with SDG&E. They are working through that process.
- What's the budget for this project. Response: the budget really isn't fixed right now. The ball park is about 2 million dollars per megawatt.
- So you are talking about a 400 million dollar project that you are making aggressive plans to implement, and you don't have a contract yet to sell the electricity. How far do you get into a 400 million dollar project without having the actual energy to sell? Response: In this project, we know there will be a buyer, even though we don't know the specific buyer at this point.
- What monies do you pay BLM for the use of their land. Response: We do pay them a royalty – but we don't have the information right now. The Chair mentioned \$4,000 per installed megawatt. Response: \$4,000 per MW sounds about right. Group member noted that works out to be about \$800,000 per year for a 400 million dollar project and none of it will be of local benefit.
- As Permitting and Environmental Director for Iberdrola, and you mentioned being an advisor for Fish and Wildlife, isn't that a conflict of interest? Response: The advisory committee was set up

asking advice from folks from the environmental community, industry, and the State wildlife agencies to develop guidelines on renewable power. What are the other industry reps? Response: FPL Energy, Horizon/Verizon, Iberdrola, ADS, SeaWest.

**A short break was taken at this point.**

**B. POD 08-015: Meteorological and (MET) testing facility zoning ordinance amendment:** At a September 24<sup>th</sup> hearing, the board of Supervisors voted to have staff return in 120 days with a list of options on how to streamline the permitting and installation of met towers. Those speaking in support of removing the MUP requirement included SDG&E, Iberdrola Renewables, consultant Michael Stevens, and absentee property owner George Coladonato. Invenergy was also in attendance. DPLU has now asked for comments on the proposed amendment to remove the current Major Use Permit requirement and to include a definition, height exemption, and the MET Facility to the Temporary Use Regulations. MET towers are generally used for a minimum of three years to collect data to be used for potential industrial wind turbine projects. Current turbine heights exceed 400 feet in height. Comment deadline is December 10, 2008. The Vice Chair's draft response letter was reviewed and discussed with the need for a cover letter. *M/S: Parsons/McKernan to accept the draft as amended with a cover letter also mentioning the Community Plan. 6-0-0*

**C. Request that Sexually Violent Predators (SVP) be accommodated at planned California Health Care Facility at Donovan State Prison.** The potential for housing Sexually violent Predators is not part of the proposed action, however, Supervisor Dianne Jacob has made the request that the potential for housing SVP's be considered. There was a brief discussion of the current SVP issues and proposal. *M/S Tisdale/Stuart to send a letter of support of the Supervisor's letter with the addition of the new placement of the SVP at the new prison in Imperial Valley. 6-0-0*

**D. West-Wide Energy corridor programmatic EIS:** The Final PEIS & Maps for the proposed energy corridor have been released. The Boulevard, Jacumba, Campo, area are included in the designated energy corridor for public lands which can include multiple power lines, phone lines, fiber optic lines, gas, oil, and hydrogen pipelines. The Cleveland National Forest route is restricted to transmission lines only. A formal legal challenge has been filed against this and other national energy corridors. New reports encourage more high-pressure gas lines in Southern California. *M/S Stuart/Polen that we reiterate our previous comments in opposition. 6-0-0*

**E. San Diego County draft General Plan:** The Draft General Plan, the first comprehensive update in 30 years, is available for a 75 day review period. It is also available online at [www.sdcounty.ca.gov](http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov). This item will be on the January agenda.

**F. Dark Sky Community Initiative:** Diane Ang is working on this initiative to request from the International Dark Sky Association a Dark Sky designation for Boulevard. She shared that this is a four-step process for the application. One step is a letter of support from the community planning group. *M/S Parsons/Noland that we write a letter of support for the dark sky community designation for Boulevard. 6-0-0*

## **OLD BUSINESS UPDATES:**

**A. BLM has released the Record of Decision (ROD) impacting McCain Valley:** The 30-day comment deadline started November 12 on the ROD which triples the amount of acreage available to Iberdrola for industrial wind energy and opens up thousands more acreage for other renewable energy and mining.

**B. Sunrise Powerlink proposed decisions have been released:** In direct conflict with Assigned ALJ's rejection of the project, the assigned Commissioner proposed approval of the southern routing through our area with the condition that the line be used for renewable energy most from Imperial Valley. The PUC president issued a third alternate decision recommending approval of the southern route without conditions.

**C. SEMPRA's Baja Wind application for Presidential Permit for Cross-Border 500KV Line at Jacumba (DOE docket no. PP-334):** No action from DOE.

**D. SDG&E's proposed Eco Substation and 14 miles of new transmission line required for wind generation projects:** No new info. CPUC application not yet filed by SDG&E

**E. Campo Landfill:** Supplemental EIS still pending release for public comment.

**F. Lansing Companies:** No new information on plans for master-planned community and/or industrial wind turbine projects.

**G. Invenenergy Wind:** No new information other than their reported involvement in pushing for relaxation of the current Major Use Permit requirement for MET towers and several signed agreements with absentee property owners.

There was no further public comment. The meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by:

Donna Tisdale, Chair 1-26-09